

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR 1902, OF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA.

Rithum

To the Members of the Urban District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Board, it is my duty to present to this Council an Annual Report which shall contain an account of the Sanitary conditions existing in this district; of the means adopted in improving those conditions; of the influences affecting, or threatening to affect, injuriously the public health of the inhabitants; and the action which has been taken to control and combat those influences; also any allied information; and lastly, the Vital Statistics.

The Urban District comprises an area of 339 acres, and I estimate the resident population at the middle of 1902 to be 2,250.

The Water Supply of the district, with the exception of the Bower Rigg estate supplied with water from North Seaton Pit, is still dependent upon the public and private wells and on rain water. The supply is barely sufficient during the summer months, when there is a large afflux of visitors to the village. The water from the main wells is apparently wholesome, but owing to the risks of surface and specific contamination and the increasing population, it is most highly desirable that a better and constant supply should be obtained. A chance of obtaining water is now offered you by the Tynemouth Water Company's scheme, and I strongly advocate your giving the matter your earnest consideration.

During the year I have made systematic monthly inspections of the district with the Inspector of Nuisances, paying special attention to ashpits, privies, sewers, drains, cowbyres, slaughter-houses, and bakehouses, thus ensuring that as a rule the inhabitants have their premises in good order, and when insanitary conditions have been found, attention has at once been drawn to them, and these conditions remedied. The removal of refuse, ashes, etc., is, on the whole, done satisfactorily, and each ashpit, etc. is cleaned out at least once a month.

The Sewerage system of the district has also acted fairly well. I have found many of the dwellings of the poorer classes badly lighted and ventilated, and there is a tendency in some quarters to overcrowding. One case has already been dealt with. Some of the houses in Prospect Place have no proper ashpit and privy accommodation, much of the refuse being deposited on the Moor. This I should like to see remedied if possible.

During the year many new houses have been built chiefly for the working classes. The plans, &c. have to meet the requirements of your byelaws, and you are rightly exercising due care in passing plans, &c. The construction of these houses is carried on under the supervision of your Surveyor, thus ensuring that the houses, &c. shall be built as per plans passed.

In June, 1902, I drew your attention to the fact that the Notification of certain infectious diseases, although compulsory since January, 1900, did not appear to be in operation in the district, and your Council promptly took the necessary steps to carry out the provisions of the Acts.

Besides the above, the following Sanitary work and improvements have been done during the year :—

Coble Inn.—Taking up, diverting and relaying drains, erecting new urinal and out-offices.

West House.—Taking up drains under house, diverting drainage, building out-offices, and adding yard.

The erection of Telephone poles in Main Street.

Roads.—800 lineal yards of road taken up and re-made from Woodhorn Lane end to Western boundary of Township. The roads have been rolled with the steam roller for the first time in the history of Newbiggin. The road in Main Street from Woodhorn Lane end to East end of the Village is very bad, and I hope to see this remedied in 1903.

Footpaths.—240 lineal yards cement concrete footpath, kerb and whinstone channel laid from Pond to New Ship Inn. This is a decided improvement, and is well appreciated.

Seaton Avenue.—3 manholes inserted in sewers.

Woodhorn Lane.—Additional lamps have been placed and the roadway widened and eased.

Dolphin Inn.—Improvements to stables (re-roofing and spouting) and to outhouses.

The Pond at the Elders was cleaned out in the Autumn owing to its becoming a nuisance.

Co-operative Society's New Buildings.—Improvements to roads and drains, &c., and new lairs built and premises covered in.

Bower Rigg Estate.—26 houses built on this estate. New roads, footpaths, sewers with suitable manholes, &c., constructed.

Shanls' Field.—24 houses built with similar roads, sewers, &c.

9 Houses built off Woodhorn Lane and main sewer laid.

1 house built off Front Street.

Newbiggin in 1902 did not escape Zymotic disease. In May and June Measles occurred in epidemic form, but fortunately no deaths occurred from this disease.

A few cases of Scarlet Fever occurred at intervals, but in October several cases occurred, becoming epidemic. By exclusion of children from infected houses, from school, school closure was avoided. At the close of the year the disease, though showing signs of abating, was still prevalent. This epidemic of Scarlet Fever was prevalent not only in Newbiggin, but generally in the surrounding districts. Altogether 39 cases were notified, with one death. One case of Enteric fever, and one of Erysipelas also occurred. In 1902 we were remarkably free from Epidemic Diarrhœa. In the above cases whenever practicable, Isolation and Disinfection were recommended and carried out, disinfectants being freely supplied by your Council. Unfortunately we have no Isolation Hospital or Steam Disinfector, so that it is difficult to check the spread of infectious diseases among the poorer classes. Bearing in mind the prevalence of Smallpox in the country, I think it is very necessary that some arrangement should be made with the Ashington Urban Council, so that any cases occurring may be sent to their new Isolation Hospital.

VITAL STATISTICS.

There have been 79 births (birth rate 35·1 per thousand), and 34 deaths (death rate 15·1 per thousand.)

The deaths occurred at the following ages:—

Deaths under 1 year	...	...	...	...	7
„ 1 year and under 5 years	...	...	...	...	1
„ 5 „ „ 15 „	...	...	...	...	0
„ 15 „ „ 25 „	...	...	...	...	1
„ 25 „ „ 65 „	...	...	...	...	8
„ 65 „ and upwards	...	...	...	...	17

The Infant mortality is 88·6, and is lower than it has been during the last ten years. It compares most favourably with 1901, when it was returned at the enormous figure of 250 per 1,000 births.

The Zymotic death rate is ·44.

The heaviest mortality occurs as will be seen at ages of 65 and upwards.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

Scarlet Fever, 1; Phthisis, 5; General Tuberculosis, 1; Bronchitis, 5; Premature Birth, 1; Heart Diseases, 5; Different Forms of Paralysis, 7; Convulsions, 4; Senile Decay, 1; Peritonitis, 2; Gangrene, 1; Ectopic Gestation, 1; Total, 34.

VITAL STATISTICS DURING 1902 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

Year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths registered in Dist.			
		No.	Rate.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.	
				No.	Rate per 1000 Births Registered	No.	Rate.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1892	1634	69	42·2	11	159·4	37	22·6
1893	1670	65	38·9	11	153·8	30	17·9
1894	2300	71	30·8	14	197·1	40	17·3
1895	2339	74	31·2	14	189	35	14·9
1896	2367	88	37·1	11	125	26	10·9
1897	2402	75	30·9	14	185·3	41	17
1898	2446	69	28·2	13	188·4	35	14·3
1899	2490	77	30·9	12	155·8	33	13·2
1900	2535	75	29·5	7	93·3	30	11·8
1901	2500	84	34	21	250	39	15·8
Averages for years 1892-1901.	2268	74·7	32·93	12·8	171·3	34·8	15·3
1902	2250*	79	35·1	7	88·6	34	15·1

Note.—Rates in Columns 4 and 8 calculated per 1,000 estimated population. * In addition—during the summer months from 400 to 500 visitors reside at Newbiggin.

The health of the inhabitants and the Sanitary state of the district at the close of the year, with the exception of the occurrence of Scarlet Fever alluded to above, was fairly satisfactory.

I am, Gentlemen,

Faithfully yours,

VINCENT BURROW,

M.D., B.S., M.R.C.S. Eng. L.R.C.P. Lon.

Fellow of the Society of Medical Officers of Health.

Jan. 26th, 1903,
Cowpen House,
Newbiggin-by-Sea.